

Application No.: 10/523,731
Reply to Office Action of: November 9, 2006

Explanation of Drawing Changes

The Replacement Drawing Sheet submitted herewith addresses the Examiner's objection and merely amends Figs. 1 and 2 by designating them a "Prior Art".

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended the drawings by designating Figs. 1 and 2 as prior art. Applicant has also amended claims 1, 9, 11, 12, 22 and 23, addressing the claim objections and rejections under 35 USC §112 as requested by the examiner. It is believed that the drawings and claims are now in compliance therewith, and it is requested that the rejections thereof be withdrawn.

Claims 1-23 are currently pending in the application. Claims 2, 3 and 5-23 were indicated allowable if re-written in independent form including the limitations of the base and intervening claims, and claims 1 and 4 were rejected as being anticipated by Koehn, U.S. Patent No. 5,845,665. Applicant acknowledges the allowability of claims 2, 3 and 5-23 and, further, respectfully submits that claims 1 and 4 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Koehn '665 and that those claims are also allowable thereover.

As examiner acknowledged, Koehn '665 discloses a winch having a rope shaft/drum 33 which is driven by a manual crank 38 for winding up the rope 30. Koehn '665 further discloses a releasable anti-reverse mechanism including a ratchet wheel 40 on the rope shaft/drum 33 and a pawl 43. The pawl 43 is manually operable for engaging the ratchet wheel 40 and preventing reverse rotation of the shaft/drum 33. (See Koehn '665 at column 4 lines 11-23.)

However, Koehn '665 does not teach or suggest anything similar to the Applicant's feeler which responds to the direction of entry of the rope and which thereby locks the rope drum for preventing winding in the wrong direction. Unlike Applicant's feeler, the Koehn element 52 is merely a roller member which, as described at column 3 lines 53-67, tapers inwardly to a necked central portion for ensuring that the cable 30 is biased to the middle of that roller member. Roller member 52 is part of the roller assemblies 48 which are used at the bends of post 15 for guiding the cable 30. As best seen in Fig. 6 of Koehn, the screw 54, 55 of the roller member 52 merely acts as a pivot point for the pawl 43. The pawl 43 is, thus, manually or gravitationally interconnected with the ratchet wheel 40 and is not moveable in response to or by the cable 30.

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Unlike Koehn, Applicant's claimed feeler responds to the direction of entry of the rope such that, if the rope is fully unwound or if the rope is wound onto the rope drum, the feeler coacts with a stop of the locking member and thereby locks the rope drum if winding occurs in the wrong direction. Koehn does not teach or suggest anything similar or equivalent to Applicant's feeler which stops the drum directly in response to the direction of entry of the rope. Accordingly, claim 1 is novel, unobvious and allowable thereover.

For the reasons set forth above, the allowance of all the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for any extension of time or payment of fee, Applicant hereby petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 16-0248, Pappas Law Offices. Should the Examiner have any further questions

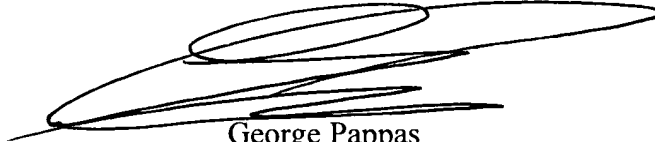
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regarding any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 426-2340.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosures:

Replacement Drawing Sheet
Acknowledgement Postcard

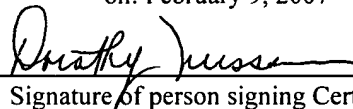
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